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Goodbye Septic Tanks, Hello Sewer Line

By Cathy Tyson

“You can now flush with confidence,” says Lafayette City Council member Mike Anderson. He’s referring to the restroom facility at city-owned Buckeye Fields, also known as Chaney Fields, home of Lafayette Little League. The park used to have a septic tank, but it’s now hooked up to the recently extended Central Contra Costa Sanitary line.

Because there was no room for leach lines when the fields were constructed, the restrooms had septic tanks that unfortunately, due to the amount of users, had to be pumped sometimes up to twice per week – at

a cost of almost \$20,000 per year to the City of Lafayette. The tanks were fully enclosed, according to Jennifer Russell, parks, trails and recreation director, “so odors were never an issue.”

Negotiating over a period of roughly 10 years, City Manager Steven Falk worked with neighbors in the immediate area who were also on septic systems and with the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District to split the cost of extending the line further down St. Mary’s Road. Over time, public works director Ron Lefler expects a substantial savings for the city.

KB Condos Almost Ready to Break Ground

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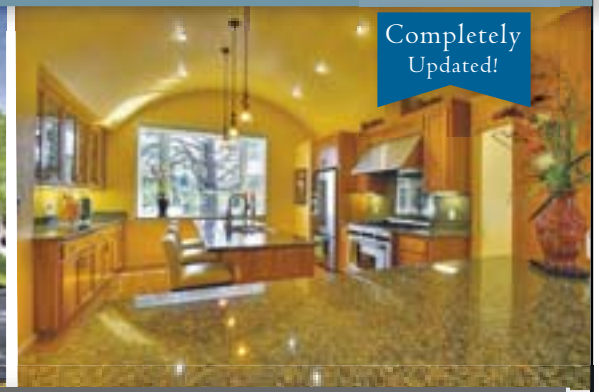
Still, concerns lingered about the aesthetics of the building, so the council referred the revised plans back to the planning and design review commissions for comment. A sticking point with many citizens during the hearings was the height of the building, which in its final iteration is 55 feet tall, after the developer agreed to take off the top story – which is shorter than the adjacent Town Center brown shingled apartments. KB describes the height as “three and four stories over podium parking.”

Ultimately the new lower height, while still substantial, was approved. “The increase in height is compensated by the provision of three public outdoor spaces, a landscaped area between the building and Happy Valley Creek, a new pedestrian corridor along the south building façade and a community park where these two spaces meet,” states the City Council resolution that was adopted on Nov. 26, 2012. KB Home did not reply to request for comment on when ground-breaking will occur.

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